

3.9 LAND USE and SOCIOECONOMICS

3.9.1 Affected Environment

Existing Land Uses On-site

The Park Lake Homes community was built in 1942 to provide homes for defense workers and their families during WWII.¹ The development originally included 600 residential units in 300 buildings. Project design included elements of “new town” theories that began evolving in the late 1920’s and 1930’s and included curvilinear streets, short cul-de-sacs and open spaces that provided elements of a self-contained, planned community. Today, the Park Lake Homes community consists of 569 units of public housing in 329 buildings (*Section 2.3* Figure 2.3-1). All units are rental units and the majority of households are at or below 50 percent median income. The site also contains nine other buildings that contain non-residential uses such as a community center, maintenance facilities, storage buildings, a Head Start school, and a secondary building containing a food bank and administrative offices.

The civic/community service buildings are clustered in the central and southern portions of the site while the public housing structures are distributed evenly throughout the site. Considering all 569 units, residential density on the site is approximately 6.5 units per gross acre.

The Park Lake Homes community is located in unincorporated King County immediately south and west² of the Seattle City limits; the City of Burien is located to the south (refer to Figure 2.1-1 and 2.1-2 in *Section 2.1* of this Draft EIS). The site is located along the eastern portion of an upland plateau between West Seattle and Burien. Territorial views are possible from many locations on the site.

As indicated in **Table 3.9-1**, the predominant land uses on the site are lawn/landscape area, streets/roads/driveways/parking, and residential and non-residential buildings.

Table 3.9-1
EXISTING LAND USES ON-SITE

Land Use	Area in Acres	Percent of Total Acreage
Buildings	17.5	19
Streets/Roads/Driveways/Parking	27.5	29
Lawn/Landscape Area/Natural Vegetation/Critical Area & Parks	46.0	49
Other (Sidewalks, Utilities, etc.)	<u>2.5</u>	<u>3</u>
Total	93.5	100

Note: School district ownership is not included.

Source: Goldsmith & Associates, Inc.

¹ Refer to *Section 3.11, Historic and Cultural Resources* of this Draft EIS for a detailed description of the historical character of the site and surrounding area.

² The east portion of the site borders the Seattle City limits.

Land Uses in the Vicinity of the Site

The project site is part of an urban area within unincorporated King County. This urban area contains a variety of single-family and multi-family residential structures, recreation facilities, and office and commercial uses. With its 329 buildings of similar size and design, together with the curvilinear street pattern, Park Lake Homes is a distinct land use in the area (see **Figure 3.9-1**).

Both natural and built features influence the land use pattern surrounding the project site. The primary natural feature in the area is the Salmon Creek 1 wetland area, which separates the Park Lake Homes Community from single-family residential neighborhoods and the White Center commercial area to the west. Topography, as described above, also influences development – primarily east of the site. The western slope of the plateau that Park Lake Homes is located on is within the Salmon Creek 1 wetland that separates adjacent neighborhoods; the eastern slope of the overall site, described above, separates the Park Lake Homes Community from commercial development and highways SR 509 and SR 99 further to the east. The off-site wetland that borders the west-side of the site and the hillside on the east-side of the site form natural western and eastern edges of the existing Park Lake Homes Community.

Significant built features that influence the land use pattern in the area consist primarily of local roads, several of which cross through the Park Lake Homes Community. In addition to providing the primary north/south transportation routes in West Seattle and through to this part of King County, 15th Avenue SW and 18th Avenue SW contain concentrations of multi-family residential, retail/service and office uses in this area. SR 509 and SR 99 are major north-south routes that are located to the east of the project site.

As noted in *Section 3.13 Public Services and Utilities* of this Draft EIS, the former White Center Heights Elementary School was located on the south-central portion of the Park Lake Homes site. That school has been closed and the building demolished. A new elementary school is presently under construction at the site of the former school.

On the west, the area immediately adjacent to the Park Lake Homes community (west of the wetland) is urban in character and consists primarily of single-family residential uses (zoned R-12). Some multi-family residential, retail/service and office uses are present approximately two blocks further west along 13th Avenue SW and 14th Avenue SW. Further to the west is the County-designated Unincorporated Activity Center of White Center. It is characterized by concentrations of urban density multi-family, retail/service and office uses, generally between 16th Avenue SW and 35th Avenue SW.

To the immediate east is a wooded hillside between the Park Lake Homes Community and highways SR 509 and SR 99. This area is primarily vacant and wooded, but contains commercial and mixed uses within the City of Seattle. Further to the east along beyond SR 99 is the Duwamish River and major industrial uses within the City of Seattle (Boeing Field).

The area immediately north of the project site, located within Seattle, slopes slightly downward in a northeasterly direction and contains single- and multi-family residential uses, as well as Westcrest Park where the West Seattle Reservoir is located. Beyond this area are the West Seattle neighborhoods of Westwood and High Point that contain mostly single-family residential uses.



0.3 0 0.3 0.6 Miles



Immediately south of the project site land uses consist of mostly single-family (zoned R-4) and multi-family residential uses (zoned R12) within King County. White Center Park, White Center Heights Park, Lakewood Park, and Salmon Creek Park are also located south of Park Lake Homes.

The site is within the White Center area and within the Urban Growth Area. Goals for urban areas within the County state that 'new residential development in the Urban Growth Area should occur where facilities and services can be provided at the lowest public cost and in a timely fashion. The Urban Growth Area should have a variety of housing types and prices, including mobile home parks, multi-family development, townhouses and small-lot, single-family development.'

Planning and Zoning Designations *Comprehensive Plan* Land Use Map designates the Park Lake Homes site as Urban Residential >12 du/ac. Areas adjacent to the project site to the south and west located within King County are designated Urban Residential 4-12 du/ac (south and directly west); and Unincorporated Activity Center (two blocks west). Areas adjacent to Park Lake Homes to the north and east are located within the City of Seattle and are designated for single-family residential (north) [SF 7200] and commercial uses (east).

The *King County Zoning Code* (Title 21A) designates the Park Lake Homes site as *Urban Residential 12-48 du/ac (R-18)*. The base density for this site is 18 du/ac; the maximum density allowed for this site is 27 du/ac and the minimum density requirement is approximately 75 percent of the base density or 13.5 du/ac (KCC 21A.12.030 and 21A.12.085). Permitted land uses in this zone include all forms of residential and residential accessory uses, associated recreational facilities, schools, and limited neighborhood commercial uses. As outlined in the Zoning Code, the purpose of this designation is to implement comprehensive plan goals and policies for housing quality, diversity and affordability, and to efficiently use urban residential land, public services and energy. The purpose of the *Urban Residential 12-48 du/ac (R-18)* zone is accomplished by allowing a mix of predominantly apartment and townhouse dwelling units, combined with other development types. A variety of densities and sizes is encouraged by establishing density designations. The *Urban Residential 12-48 du/ac (R-18)* zone facilitates advanced area-wide planning for public facilities and services and protection of environmentally sensitive sites from over development.

Areas adjacent to the project site to the south and west are located within King County and are designated Urban Residential 1-8 du/ac (zone R-6, Residential 6du/ac) to the south, commercial and office to the west, and neighborhood business northeast of the site. Areas adjacent to Park Lake Homes to the north and east are located within the City of Seattle and are designated and zoned for single-family (north) [SF 7200] and commercial uses (east).

3.9.2 Socioeconomics

Population

The Study Area

The study area for evaluation (see **Figure 3.9-2**) of socioeconomic impacts includes ten census tracts, three of which are located in Seattle (CT 113, CT 114, CT 115), with the balance in unincorporated King County (CT 264, CT 265, CT 266, CT 267, CT 268.01, CT 268.02, CT 269,

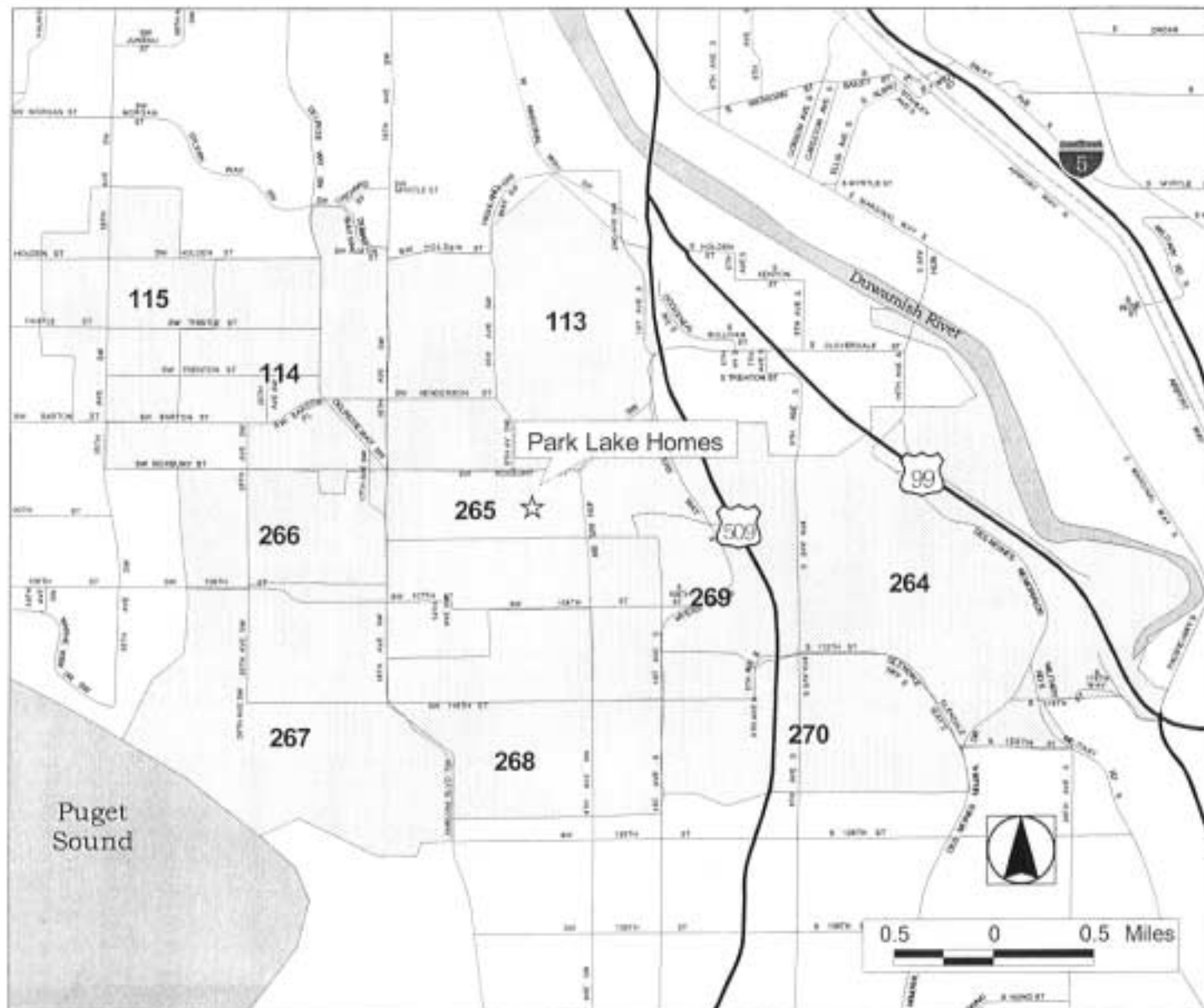


Figure 3.9-2

Study Area Census Tracts

Huckell/Weinman

Associates, Inc.

HWA



CT 270). As shown by Figure 3.9-2, the area is bounded approximately by SW Holden Street on the north, SW 126th Street on the south, SW 30th and SW 37th Avenues on the west, and SR 99 on the east. The project site is located near the center of the area in CT 265.

The study area also includes two Census Designated Places (CDP's), the White Center CDP³ and the Boulevard Park CDP.⁴

In addition to Census data, the description of the affected environment includes data from King County, the King County Housing Authority, Dupre + Scott Apartment Advisors, Inc., Real Vision Research, Inc., the Northwest Multiple Listing Service, and the Annie E. Casey Making Connections Project.⁵

Growth Trends and Population Comparisons

In 2000, the study area population was 49,061, an increase of 12 percent over the 1990 population. In the 1990's, the study area grew at a faster rate than the City of Seattle to the north (9 percent), and than the surrounding Highline Community Planning Area (CPA) (10 percent). In Census Tract 265 where the project site is located, the population grew by 10 percent. None of the areas experienced increases as high as the 15 percent population growth rate of King County (**Table 3.9-2**).

Table 3.9-2
POPULATION GROWTH TRENDS

Area	1990 Population	2000 Population	Per Cent Change
King County	1,507,319	1,737,034	15.2%
Highline CPA	133,800	146,800	9.7%
Seattle	516,300	563,400	9.1%
Study Area	43,725	49,061	12.2%
CT 265	2,387	2,640	10.6%

Source: US Census 1990 and 2000; *The 2002 King County Growth Report*; Huckell/Weinman Associates, Inc. 2003

Residents of the study area represent 2.8 percent of the countywide population and about one-third (33.4 percent) of the population in the Highline CPD. The 1,656 residents of the Park Lake Homes housing development comprise 3.4 percent of the study area population and 62.7 percent of the population in the surrounding census tract.

³ The White Center CPD includes Census Tracts 265, 266, 267, 268.01, 264.02, 269; and Census Block Groups 270.003, 274.005, 275.001, and 275.005.

⁴ The Boulevard Park CPD includes Census Tracts 264 and 271; and Census Block Groups 270.001, 270.002, 274.001, and 274.004.

⁵ Through the Making Connections Initiative, the Annie E. Casey Foundation has funded numerous surveys and reports on the White Center and Boulevard Park areas, including needs assessments, investment plans, youth mapping projects, indicator reports, study circle summaries, and demographic profiles.

White Center and Boulevard Park are two unincorporated communities within the study area. In addition to being designated as specific “Places” in the 2000 Census, King County has recognized their individual, but related housing, community, and economic development needs in numerous plans and investment initiatives. White Center is the larger of the two communities with a population in 1999 of 20,975. Boulevard Park has a population of 11,188. Together the populations of these two places make up 65.6 percent of the population in the study area.

The project site is in the north-end of the White Center CPD and its residents make up 7.9 percent of the CPD population.

Population Characteristics

Race and Ethnicity

The study area, the White Center CPD, and Census Tract 265 are all significantly more racially diverse than the County (**Table 3.9-3**). In particular, higher percentages of Asian and Hispanic persons live in the study area. Nearly 70 percent of the population in the census tract is non-white and over 40 percent is Asian. In the areas surrounding the project site, the Hispanic population is nearly twice that of both the County and the housing development.

Table 3.9-3
RACIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDY AREA POPULATION

Race	Study Area	King County	White Center CPD	Census Tract 265
White	57.9%	79%	59%	31.1%
Black or African American	7.9%	7%	8%	10.8%
American Indian, Alaska Native	1.7%	2%	4%	1.5%
Asian	17.1%	13%	23%	40.2%
Native Hawaiian, Other Pacific Islander	2.0%	1%	3%	1.9%
Some other race	7.3%	4%	9%	3.5%
Hispanic, Latino of any race	12.2%	6%	12%	6.4%

Source: US Census 2000, *The 2002 King County Annual Growth Report; What We Learned About the Characteristics, Service Needs and Experiences of White Center and Boulevard Park Residents*; Huckell/Weinman Associates, Inc. 2003

In addition to the racial diversity of the area, there is also significant ethnic diversity resulting from immigration. For the 2000 Census, 15 percent of King County reported having been born outside of the United States, with 8 percent having immigrated within the last 10 years. In White Center, foreign-born residents make up 27 percent of the population, with 16 percent having immigrated within the last decade.

As indicated by **Table 3.9-4**, the project site is home to people from thirteen foreign countries. The largest number of immigrants have come from Asia, primarily Viet Nam and Cambodia.

However, there are also former residents of the Middle East, Africa, Eastern Europe, and Russia.

Table 3.9-4
ETHNICITY OF PARK LAKE HOMES RESIDENTS

Area of Origin	All Residents	Head of Household
United States	580	123
Asia/Pacific Islands	588	264
Africa	169	82
Middle East	76	33
Eastern Europe	39	15
Russia	10	4

Source: King County Housing Authority; Huckell/Weinman Associates, Inc. 2003

Age and Gender

The existing community is characterized by a significantly higher percentage of young children and teens than the study area, the surrounding census tract, or King County. Nearly 16 percent of all residents are five years of age or younger. In King County only 6.1 percent of the population is in this age group, and in the study area only 7.3 percent of population is very young children. The percentage is somewhat higher for the surrounding census tract at 10.1 percent. The situation is comparable when children and youth 17 and under are counted, as illustrated by **Table 3.9-5**.

Table 3.9-5
AGE PROFILES

Age Categories	Park Lake Homes		Study Area		King County	
0 to 5 years	242	14.6%	3,557	7.3%	105,321	6.1%
6 to 14 years	300	18.1%	6,843	14.0%	221,154	12.7%
15 to 17 years	127	7.7%	2,038	4.2%	64,171	3.7%
Total ≤ 17 years	669	40.3%	12,438	25.5%	390,646	22.5%
18 to 64 years	879	53.0%	31,884	65.0%	1,164,616	67.0%
65 or older	111	6.7%	4,739	9.7%	181,772	10.5%

Source: US Census 2000; King County Housing Authority; Huckell/Weinman Associates, Inc. 2003

The table also illustrates the proportionally lower number of elderly people residing in the existing community compared with the surrounding area and region.

The gender profile of the existing community is also markedly different from that of the other areas analyzed. Countywide, the population of men and women is roughly equal -- 49.8 male and 50.2 percent female. The same is true for the study area. However, in Census Tract 265, women make up 54.2 percent of the population and in the existing community they are 57.8 percent.

The gender disparity is particularly significant for people 18 and older. In Census Tract 265, the women in this age group are 35.7 percent of the total population while men of comparable age make up only 27.5 percent of the total. In the existing community women make up 38.0 percent of the population 18 years and older, while men are only 21.6 percent.

Household Characteristics

There are 18,819 households in the study area. The 564 households in the existing community represent 2.9 percent of the total. Most of the households in the study area, 62.1 percent, are families. Single person households make up only 27.6 percent of the total. Census Tract 265 has an even higher percentage (82.7 percent) of families, and a significantly smaller percentage (14 percent) of single people living alone.

The study area, and to an even greater extent, census tract 265, are characterized by a relatively large percentage of female headed households. Whereas nine percent (9 percent) of the County's households are headed by single women, 14.5 percent of study area households and over one-third (33.5 percent) of the households in Census Tract 265 are headed by women.

Income and Poverty

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines low-income categories as follows:

- Extremely low-income 0 -- 30 percent of area median income
- Very low-income..... 31 percent -- 50 percent of area median income
- Low-income 51 percent -- 80 percent of area median income

It is typical for public housing residents to have extremely low incomes. The vast majority (88 percent) of households residing in the existing community are extremely low-income and another 10 percent are very low income. The average annual household income is \$11,730. By contrast, the median household income for King County in 1999 was \$53,157. Of the 564 Park Lake Homes households, 473 (84 percent) report a public program (includes Social Security) as their sole source of income.

Incomes are also low, and the rate of poverty high, in the surrounding area. The poverty rate for King County is 8 percent. In White Center the rate is 15 percent and Census Tract 265 is located in an area where the poverty rate is 24 percent. About one third of all of the census block groups in White Center and Boulevard Park have poverty rates of 15 percent, or more.

The Annie E. Casey Foundation has sponsored a number of studies of White Center and Boulevard Park through its Making Connections Project. In *What We Have Learned About the Characteristics, Service Needs and Experiences of White Center and Boulevard Park Residents*, the area is described as follows:

"The average poverty rate of 14 percent in White Center and Boulevard Park obscures the fact that there are several neighborhoods with concentrated poverty in both areas. For instance, in the Northern part of White Center [the general location of the project site] half of all residents survive on incomes below the

federal poverty level, with average annual per capita incomes of \$5,300 (2000 Census).

Residents of all racial backgrounds in White Center and Boulevard Park experience economic and social hardship. However, nonwhite residents are at least twice as likely to be poor as white residents (2000 Census). 41 percent of students were eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch in the Highline School District in 1999 compared to 25 percent in King County."

Study Area Housing Characteristics

The Housing Stock and Development Trends

There were 19,501 housing units in the study area in 2000, which comprised 2.6 percent of the total King County housing stock. The existing 569 units represent 2.9 percent of the housing in the study area. Housing units in the study area increased by 7.5 percent from 1990 to 2000. By comparison, the County's housing stock grew at about twice that rate (14.2 percent) in the same period.

As shown by **Table 3.9-6**, the housing stock in the study area contains a higher percentage of older units than the countywide housing stock. The majority of the housing (66.4 percent) in the study area was built prior to 1960. Countywide 48.9 percent of units were constructed pre-1960. Only 10.7 percent of the study area housing units were constructed in the last decade compared to 16.6 percent countywide.

Table 3.9-6
AGE OF HOUSING

Year Built	Number of Units	% Total Units
1990-March 2000	2,076	10.7%
1980-1989	2,167	11.1%
1970-1979	2,309	11.8%
1960-1969	3,082	15.8%
1950-1959	4,254	21.8%
1940-1949	3,368	17.3%
1939 or Before	<u>2,245</u>	<u>11.5%</u>
Total	19,501	100%

Source: US Census 2000; Huckell/Weinman Associates, Inc. 2003

Housing in the area is characterized primarily by single family and small, multi-family properties. In 2000, 62.6 percent of all housing units were single family units. In addition, 7.4 percent of units were in small multi-family properties of two to four units. The existing community is made up of small multi-family structures. Only 10 percent of units were located in structures of 20 units or larger. Just under one fifth of all housing units (18.9 percent) were in properties of 10 or

more units. **Table 3.9-7** shows the number of housing units by structure type for residential properties in the study area in 2000.

Table 3.9-7
UNITS BY STRUCTURE TYPE

Structure Type	% Total Units
1, detached	62.6%
1, attached	4.3%
2	2.8%
3 or 4	4.6%
5 to 9	5.6%
10 to 19	5.5%
20 to 49	8.1%
50 +	5.3%
Mobile Home	0.9%
Other	0.3%
Total	100%

Source: US Census 2000; Huckell/Weinman Associates, Inc. 2003

Nearly 40 percent of the housing in larger structures (10+ units) is located in the three study area census tracts in Seattle. The bulk of the larger multifamily properties in King County's portion of the study area are located to the south and west of the project site. Housing units in Census Tract 265 are predominately (91.7 percent) in one and two unit structures.

Over one quarter (26.3 percent) of the housing units in the study area are small units, either studios or one-bedrooms. Two bedroom units make up about one third (32.6 percent) of all units. In comparison with the housing stock countywide, housing in the study area has a significantly lower percentage of large (3 or more bedroom) units. Larger units make up 41.1 percent of housing in the study area while they are over one half (50.2 percent) of all units countywide.

The housing in Census Tract 265 is characterized by a significantly higher percentage of smaller units than the study area. Forty-three percent of the units are one-bedroom or smaller and only 27.7 percent of the units have three or more bedrooms (**Table 3.9-8**).

Table 3.9-8
UNIT SIZE COMPARISON

# Bedrooms	% Units in Study Area	% Units in Census Tract 265	% Units Countywide
0	4.3%	1.9%	5.5%
1	22.0%	43.1%	18.3%
2	32.6%	27.7%	26.0%
3	27.9%	21.9%	29.6%
4	10.9%	1.5%	16.4%
5+	2.3%	4%	4.2%
	100%	100%	100%

Source: US Census 2000; Huckell/Weinman Associates, Inc. 2003

Overcrowded Housing

Overcrowded housing is an issue for residents of the study area. Overcrowding is defined as more than one person per room. The 2000 Census reported that 13.1 percent of the occupied housing units in the area were overcrowded, almost three times the County rate of 4.9 percent. In the study area, overcrowded housing is a problem for 715 owner households and 1,747 renters.

Tenure

As shown by **Table 3.9-9**, the number of households in the study area grew from 17,456 in 1990 to 18,814 in 2000, an increase of 1,358 households (7.8 percent). In comparison, King County households increased by 15.4 percent and Seattle households by 9.2 percent.

In both 1990 and 2000, there were more homeowners than renters in the study area. In 1990 56.8 percent of households were homeowners. The numbers of both renters and owners increased by 2000, and the percentage of renter households increased slightly.

Table 3.9-9
HOUSING TENURE, 1990 AND 2000

Tenure	1990		2000	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Owners	9,915	56.8%	10,609	56.4%
Renters	<u>7,541</u>	<u>43.2%</u>	<u>8,205</u>	<u>43.6%</u>
Total	17,456	100%	18,814	100%

Source: US Census 1990 and 2000; Huckell/Weinman Associates, Inc. 2003

Similarly, there are more owners than renters countywide. In 2000, 59.8 percent of housing units were owner-occupied. Unlike in the overall study area and the County, renters far outnumber homeowners in Census Tract 265 where they are 77.4 percent of all households.

In the study area 89.9 percent of all homeowners and more than a quarter of all renters live in single family units. Over one third of renters (37.9 percent) occupy units in rental properties of 10 to 50 units. **Table 3.9-10** compares the composition of the rental housing stock in the King County, the study area, and Census Tract 265.

A significantly higher percentage of renters in Census Tract 265 live in single unit and duplex properties than in either of the other two areas. The presence of Park Lake Homes in the census tract, in part, accounts for this difference. However, even discounting the presence of Park Lake Homes, Census Tract 265 has a much greater percentage of renters living in single family homes than in either of the other two areas. Conversely, in King County and the study area, much larger percentages of renters live in multifamily properties of 10 units and more.

Table 3.9-10
COMPOSITION OF RENTAL HOUSING STOCK

Structure Type	King County		Study Area		Census Tract 265	
	# Units	% Total	# Units	% Total	# Units	% Total
1, detached	54,530	19.1%	2,302	28.1%	321	37.5%
1, attached	7,435	2.6%	655	8.0%	303	35.4%
2	12,301	4.3%	477	5.8%	162	18.9%
3 or 4	25,359	8.9%	702	8.6%	27	3.2%
5 to 9	39,927	14.0%	950	11.6%	16	1.9%
10 to 19	46,927	16.4%	943	11.5%	0	0.0%
20 to 49	47,064	16.5%	1,287	15.6%	0	0.0%
50 +	49,380	17.3%	885	10.8%	5	0.6%
Mobile Home	2,309	0.8%	13	0.2%	23	2.7%
Other	<u>2</u>	<u>0.0%</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0.0%</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0.0%</u>
Total	285,465	100%	8,205	100%	857	100%

Source: US Census 1990 and 2000; Huckell/Weinman Associates, Inc. 2003

Assisted Rental Housing in the Study Area

The King County *Consolidated Housing and Community Development Plan for 2000-2003* defines assisted rental housing as:

“...housing units that received public funds that supported the purchase, acquisition, rehabilitation or construction—usually through capital loans or

grants....This financial support ensures that the units remain affordable to low or moderate-income households for the long term...”

Through June of 1998 the County’s inventory of assisted housing included 16,218 units in areas of the County outside of Seattle.

The *Consolidated Plan* also defines subsidized rental housing as housing for which ongoing rental subsidies (used to assist tenants with the actual payment of monthly rent) are provided. In King County, the majority of this type of assistance is provided through housing authorities. These rental subsidies come primarily from the federal Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher (Voucher) program. Vouchers may be attached to a specific unit (project-based), or be provided to a low-income tenant (tenant-based) for use in a tenant-selected unit⁶ in the private rental market. In June of 1998, there were 4,161 Vouchers in use in the County outside Seattle.

The assisted housing database is not maintained in such a way to allow for an accurate count of all assisted units located in the study area. However, there are 733 public housing units (including the 569 Park Lake Homes units to be redeveloped) in that portion of the study area located in the County. In addition, there are 534 Section 8 certificates and vouchers in use in that same area. Together they represent 1,267 units, or 24.8 percent of all rental units in the County’s portion of the study area. By comparison, the total 1998 count of assisted units and certificates/vouchers for the County outside of Seattle is 20,379, or 13.4 percent of rental housing units (2000 Census.)

Rental Housing Costs and Availability

The primary sources of information for the analysis of rental housing affordability are Dupre + Scott’s *The 1-19 Unit Apartment Report*, and *The Apartment Vacancy Report*. *The 1-19 Unit Apartment Report* is published annually and provides information on rents and vacancies in smaller rental properties. *The Apartment Vacancy Report*, published twice each year, provides similar information for properties of 20 units or more.

As shown by **Table 3.9-11**, rents for all unit types have increased during this period, with rents for units in single family properties and complexes of 5 - 19 units having increased most significantly.

⁶ In order for a tenant to use a Voucher, the selected unit must pass an inspection and meet federal Housing Quality Standards, as well as rent for an amount not exceeding a federally-established Fair Market Rent.

Table 3.9-11
RENT CHANGES IN WHITE CENTER AREA, 2000-2002

	2000 Average Rent	2001 Average Rent	% Change 2000-2001	2002 Average Rent	% Change 2001-2002	% Change 2000-2002	Average Annual Change
Single Family	\$999	\$1,010	1.1%	\$1,100	8.9%	10.1%	5.06%
2-4 Units	\$624	\$612	-1.9%	\$629	2.8%	0.8%	0.40%
5-19 Units	\$569	\$637	12.0%	\$640	0.5%	12.5%	6.24%
20 + units	\$709	\$734	3.5%	\$758	3.3%	6.9%	3.46%

Source: Dupre + Scott; Huckell/Weinman Associates, Inc. 2003

The gap between average rents for White Center and King County increased dramatically in the 1990's. *The White Center Community: A Homeownership Strategy Perspective*, prepared for the Annie E. Casey Foundation by HomeSight (a nonprofit homebuyer assistance corporation) notes that:

"In 1990, White Center's rents were only 2 percent less than King County's: in 2000 that increased to a 14 percent difference. Specifically, in that decade White Center's rents increased by 40 percent: from \$513 a month to \$717 a month. King County rents rose by 57 percent: from \$522 a month to \$819 a month."

Table 3.9-12 compares 2002 average rents for White Center with those of the County and several nearby areas.

Table 3.9-12
2002 AVERAGE RENTS BY AREA AND UNIT TYPE

	King County	White Center	West Seattle	Burien	Riverton/ Tukwila
Single family	\$1,413	\$1,100	\$1,177	\$1,209	\$1,068
2-4 Units	\$868	\$629	\$876	\$606	\$622
5-19 Units	\$772	\$640	\$784	\$616	\$606
20+ Units	\$869	\$758	\$808	\$706	\$712

Source: Source: Dupre + Scott; Huckell/Weinman Associates, Inc. 2003

On average, rents for all unit types are higher in King County and in West Seattle than in the White Center area. But, with the exception of single family rentals, all other types of rental units typically command higher rents in White Center than in either Burien or Riverton/Tukwila.

Table 3.9-13 summarizes the rate of rent increase/decrease in these same areas between 2000 and 2002. In general, rents for units in all categories have risen over the two years, in spite of a weakening regional economy. The exception is units in small multi-family properties in areas south and southwest of White Center (Burien and Riverton/Tukwila) where average rents have actually decreased. Overall rent increases, based on average rents, have typically not been as high in White Center as in the other areas, with the exception of properties with 5-19 units.

Table 3.9-13
CHANGES IN AVERAGE RENTS BY AREA AND UNIT TYPE, 2000 - 2002

	King County White Center		West Seattle	Burien	Riverton/Tukwila
Single family	12.3%	10.1%	12.5%	12.4%	21.0%
2-4 Units	8.5%	0.8%	9.1%	-12.8%	-1.7%
5-19 Units	7.7%	12.5%	5.0%	5.3%	11.6%
20+ Units	9.7%	6.9%	5.9%	11.2%	11.3%

Source: Source: Dupre + Scott; Huckell/Weinman Associates, Inc. 2003

Table 3.9-14 presents comparative vacancy rates for 2002. Vacancy rate is an indicator of housing availability and demand. A vacancy rate of 5 percent represents a balanced housing market where demand is being met by the supply of new units or by existing units, as they become vacant. Much lower vacancy rates of 0 percent to 3 percent occur in “tight” housing markets where demand is high and renters cannot easily find units. (For example, during the late 1990’s many Seattle and King County neighborhoods consistently had vacancy rates between 0 percent and 2 percent.) Lower vacancy rates are also typically associated with higher rents based on the higher demand.

High vacancy rates of 7 percent to 8 percent indicate a market where landlords may have difficulty renting units due to:

- A temporary oversupply of housing because of significant new construction
- A large number of poorly managed/maintained properties
- Negative neighborhood conditions such as high crime
- Negative local or regional financial market conditions, such as a recession

Table 3.9-14
COMPARATIVE VACANCY RATES 2002

	King County	White Center	West Seattle	Burien	Riverton/ Tukwila
1-19 Units	5.1%	6.6%	4.7%	5.8%	4.8%
20+ Units	7.4%	9.3%	9.9%	8.0%	6.0%

Source: Source: Dupre + Scott; Huckell/Weinman Associates, Inc. 2003

Regional vacancies reflect a softening rental market – one result of a weakening economy. Vacancy rates in all areas are significantly lower in smaller rental complexes than in larger properties. Vacancies in both small and large properties in White Center generally exceed those of the other areas.

Table 3.9-15 shows recent vacancy trends in White Center by type and size (based on number of bedrooms) of unit.

Vacancy rates in most all of the unit categories have been rising steadily since 2000. This is consistent with regional trends. For 2002, vacancies for most all unit sizes suggest a “renter’s market” where units are more readily available than in recent years.

Table 3.9-15
WHITE CENTER VACANCY RATES 2000 – 2002

	2000	2001	2002
1-19 Units			
All Units	0.0%	6.0%	6.6%
1 BR	0.0%	7.7%	7.1%
2 BR	0.0%	7.8%	6.9%
3 BR	0.0%	0.0%	5.3%
4 BR	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
20+ Units			
All Units	3.0%	2.7%	7.5%
Studios	6.3%	3.2%	3.1%
1 BR	2.7%	3.6%	7.5%
2 BR	3.7%	2.5%	5.9%

Source: Source: Dupre + Scott; Huckell/Weinman Associates, Inc. 2003

Rental Housing Affordability

Rental housing is deemed affordable by federal standards if a household pays no more than 30 percent of their income for rent and utilities. Housing affordability is often an issue for households with 30 percent (extremely low-income), 50 percent (very low-income), and 80 percent (low-income) of median income. **Table 3.9-16** shows the 2002 federal income limits for households in these income categories.

Table 3.9-16
2002 FEDERAL INCOME GUIDELINES

Household Size	30% Median	50% Median	80% Median
1	\$16,350	\$27,250	\$38,100
2	\$18,700	\$31,150	\$43,500
3	\$21,050	\$35,050	\$48,950
4	\$23,350	\$38,950	\$54,400
5	\$25,250	\$42,050	\$58,750
6	\$27,100	\$45,200	\$63,100
7	\$29,000	\$48,300	\$67,450
8	\$30,850	\$51,400	\$71,800

Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 01/31/02

The assisted housing units and Section 8 certificates/vouchers in the area serve primarily households with incomes of less than 50 percent or 30 percent of the median income. The majority of Park Lake Homes' residents (499 households) have incomes below 30 percent of the median income.

The 2000 Census data indicates that 46.3 percent of renter households in the study area pay more than 30 percent of their income for gross rent, and 20.4 percent pay more than 50 percent. **Table 3.9-17** illustrates the general affordability of the market-rate rental units in White Center for extremely low-income, very low-income, and low-income households. The rents include an estimate of monthly utility costs since the federal standard for affordable housing is based on 30 percent of monthly household income for rent *including* utilities.

Table 3.9-17
AFFORDABILITY OF MARKET RENTS AT 30%, 50%, AND 80% OF
MEDIAN INCOME

	Average Rent	Affordable Rent (30%)	Gap or Surplus	Affordable Rent (50%)	Gap or Surplus	Affordable Rent (80%)	Gap or Surplus
1-19 Units							
1 BR (1 person)	\$658	\$409	-\$249	\$681	\$24	\$953	\$296
1 BR (2 people)	\$658	\$468	-\$190	\$779	\$121	\$1,088	\$430
2 BR (2 people)	\$846	\$468	-\$378	\$779	-\$67	\$1,088	\$242
2 BR (3 people)	\$846	\$526	-\$320	\$876	\$30	\$1,224	\$378
3 BR (4 people)	\$1,263	\$584	-\$679	\$974	-\$289	\$1,360	\$97
3 BR (5 people)	\$1,263	\$631	-\$632	\$1,051	-\$212	\$1,469	\$206
4 BR (7 people)	\$1,519	\$725	-\$794	\$1,208	-\$311	\$1,686	\$167
4 BR (8 people)	\$1,519	\$771	-\$748	\$1,285	-\$234	\$1,795	\$276
20+ Units							
1 BR (1 person)	\$679	\$409	-\$270	\$681	\$2	\$953	\$274
1 BR (2 people)	\$679	\$468	-\$211	\$779	\$100	\$1,088	\$409
2 BR (2 people)	\$820	\$468	-\$352	\$779	-\$41	\$1,088	\$268
2 BR (3 people)	\$820	\$526	-\$294	\$876	\$56	\$1,224	\$404
3 BR (4 people)	\$1,072	\$584	-\$488	\$974	-\$98	\$1,360	\$288
3 BR (5 people)	\$1,072	\$631	-\$441	\$1,051	-\$21	\$1,469	\$397

Source: Huckell/Weinman Associates, Inc. 2003

In general, households with incomes of less than 30 percent of median income are unable to afford the average rent of any unsubsidized units. Those with incomes of 80 percent or more can afford a range of unit types and sizes. Households with incomes of less than 50 percent of the median income may or may not be able to find affordable rental housing in the unsubsidized market depending on the size of the unit they need. Average market rate rents for one-bedroom units are affordable for one- and two-person households. A household must be earning 50 percent or more of the median income for three people in order to afford a two-bedroom unit. The average rent for three-bedroom and larger units is not affordable for any size household with 50 percent or less of the area median income.

In April of 2001, Dupre + Scott noted that 5,400 households (about 30 percent of households in the study area, had incomes between \$25,000 and \$50,000 and would be able to afford rental units priced between \$750 and \$1,125 per month.

Homeownership⁷

Between 2000 and 2002, there were 3,168 single-family homes sold in the area that includes White Center. During that period, the average single-family home price increased by 17.8 percent from \$203,887 to \$240,139. Even with the increase, the average cost of a single-family home in the area remained well below the comparable average for King County of \$338,969.

Of the 3,168 homes sold between 2000 and 2002, 218 were newly constructed. During the three-year period, the cost of newly constructed homes increased by 14.7 percent from \$226,383 to \$259,727 (**Table 3.9-18**). Again this was well below the King County comparable average of \$401,394.

Table 3.9-18
SALES ACTIVITY IN SINGLE FAMILY HOMES, 2000 - 2002

	2000	2001	2002
All Sales*			
# Sales	1,056	1,047	1,065
Average Price	\$203,877	\$213,408	\$240,139
New Construction			
# Sales	73	68	77
Average Price	\$226,838	\$259,660	\$259,727

Source: Northwest Multiple Listing Service; Huckell/Weinman Associates, Inc. 2003

*Includes sales of both existing homes and newly constructed homes.

Between 2000 and 2002, 530 condominium units were sold. Condo sales represented 14.3 percent of all sales. In 2000, the average price of a condo unit was \$100,420. The average price had increased to \$120,672 by 2002. Even so, the average price of a condominium was only about half that of the average priced single family home.

Tables 3.9-19 through **3.9-21** illustrate affordability of homeownership in White Center by income category. In general households need at more than 80 percent, but less than 100 per cent, of the median income to afford the average price of a single family home. Households need about 50 percent of median income, or more, for the average price of a condominium.

⁷ Information on single-family and condominium sales comes from area sales activity reports provided by the Northwest Multiple Listing Service (NWMLS). The King County portion of the study area is included in NWMLS area #130. Area #130 also includes Burien, Riverton Heights, part of Tukwila, SeaTac, and Normandy Park.

Table 3.9-19
AFFORDABILITY OF HOME PURCHASE, 2-PERSON HOUSEHOLD

2002 Income Level	Payment	Loan	% Rate	Affordable Price
120% Median = \$74,760	\$1,558	\$259,861	6.00%	\$324,827
100% Median = \$62,300	\$1,298	\$216,551	6.00%	\$270,689
80% Median = \$43,500	\$906	\$151,155	6.00%	\$159,110
60% Median = \$37,800	\$779	\$129,889	6.00%	\$136,725

Source: Huckell/Weinman Associates

Assumes a 30-year, fixed-rate mortgage at 6% interest. Households with 100% & 120% of median income make a 20% downpayment. Households with 60% and 80% make a 5% downpayment.

Table 3.9-20
AFFORDABILITY OF HOME PURCHASE, 3-PERSON HOUSEHOLD

2002 Income Level	Payment	Loan	% Rate	Affordable Price
120% Median = \$84,120	\$1,753	\$292,344	6.00%	\$365,430
100% Median = \$70,100	\$1,461	\$243,620	6.00%	\$304,525
80% Median = \$48,950	\$1,020	\$170,093	6.00%	\$179,045
60% Median = \$42,060	\$876	\$146,151	6.00%	\$153,843

Source: Huckell/Weinman Associates

Assumes a 30-year, fixed-rate mortgage at 6% interest. Households with 100% & 120% of median income make a 20% downpayment. Households with 60% and 80% make a 5% downpayment.

Table 3.9-21
AFFORDABILITY OF HOME PURCHASE, 4-PERSON HOUSEHOLD

2002 Income Level	Payment	Loan	% Rate	Affordable Price
120% Median = \$93,480	\$1,948	\$324,827	6.00%	\$406,033
100% Median = \$77,900	\$1,623	\$270,689	6.00%	\$338,361
80% Median = \$54,400	\$1,133	\$189,030	6.00%	\$198,979
60% Median = \$46,740	\$974	\$162,413	6.00%	\$170,961

Source: Huckell/Weinman Associates

Assumes a 30-year, fixed-rate mortgage at 6% interest. Households with 100% & 120% of median income make a 20% downpayment. Households with 60% and 80% make a 5% downpayment.

As indicated by **Table 3.9-22**, the White Center market is considerably more affordable than nearby West Seattle where in 2001 the average home sales prices were affordable only to households with over 100 percent of the area median income and there were no market rate purchase options for households with 50 percent to 80 percent of median.

Table 3.9-22
AFFORDABILITY OF HOME PURCHASE IN WEST SEATTLE

	Income Required for Average-Priced Single Family Home	Income Required for Average-Priced New Single Family Home	Income Required for Median-Priced Condominium
2 Person Household	Over 120% Median	Over 120% Median	Over 80% Median
3 Person Household	Over 100% Median	Over 120% Median	Over 80% Median
4 Person Household	100% Median	120% Median	80% Median

Source: Huckell/Weinman Associates, Inc. 2003

Economic Conditions

Employment

Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) figures for 2000 indicate a total of 1,151,214 jobs in King County (**Table 3.9-23**). County employment increased between 1995 and 2000 by 246,331 jobs, or 21.4 percent. The largest increases occurred in the sectors of construction/resources and FIRES (finance, insurance, real estate, and services), which increased by 28.5 percent and 25.2 percent, respectively. Retail and WTCU (warehousing, transportation, communications, and utilities) jobs also increased considerably. King County also had the largest increase in jobs compared with other counties during this time period.

Table 3.9-23
KING COUNTY EMPLOYMENT TRENDS BY JOB CATEGORY

King County Jobs ¹	1995	2000	Proportion of 2000 Jobs (%)	Change 1995-2000 (%)
Construction/Resources	50,011	69,949	6.1	+28.5
FIRES ²	329,389	440,353	38.3	+25.2
Manufacturing	140,898	147,933	12.8	+4.8
Retail	157,101	189,457	16.5	+17.1
WTCU ³	134,402	158,307	13.7	+15.1
Education/Government	129,082	145,215	12.6	+11.1
Total	904,883	1,151,214	100.0	+21.4

Source: Puget Sound Regional Council, 2003.

Notes: ¹ Figures reflect "Covered Employment," employees covered under the State's unemployment insurance program.

² Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, and Services

³ Warehousing, Transportation, Communications, and Utilities

By the year 2010, the PSRC estimates that King County will have a total of 1,351,220 jobs. The estimates project increases in nearly all of the employment sectors, consistent with past trends.

An exception occurs in the manufacturing sector, where jobs are projected to decrease by 8.4 percent.

PSRC data for Census Tract 265 was used to determine job numbers for the general study area, which includes the project site (**Table 3.9-24**). For the years between 1995 and 2000, the total number of jobs decreased by 6.1 percent to 587 jobs. Jobs in the FIRES sector increased by 16.3 percent and decreased in the areas of education/government, retail, and manufacturing. Data was not available for construction/resources and WTCU sectors.

Table 3.9-24
STUDY AREA EMPLOYMENT BY JOB CATEGORY

Park Lake Homes Study Area Jobs¹	1995	2000	Proportion of 2000 Jobs (%)	Change 1995-2000 (%)
Construction/Resources	35	*	NA	NA
FIRES ²	247	295	50.2	+16.3
Manufacturing	103	101	17.2	-1.9
Retail	181	168	28.6	-7.2
WTCU ³	6	*	NA	NA
Education/Government ⁴	52	2	0.3	-96.2
Total	625	587	96.3	-6.1

Source: Puget Sound Regional Council, 2003.

Notes: ¹ Figures from Census Tract 265 and reflect "Covered Employment," employees covered under the State's unemployment insurance program.

² Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, and Services

³ Warehousing, Transportation, Communications, and Utilities

⁴ The decrease in education/government jobs could be attributed to the closure of White Center Elementary in September 1998. The closure resulted in approximately 40 fewer jobs.⁸

* The employment data has been suppressed, per a confidentiality agreement with the Employment Security Department. Data represents either less than 3 employers or 80 percent or more of the employment total is associated with one employer.

Current employment within the existing community includes an estimate of 81.5 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees. The King County Housing Authority provides the majority of the jobs at the project site through the following on-site locations: Head Start, Food Bank, KCHA Administrative Offices, YWCA Development Center, Boys and Girls Club, Maintenance Facility, and Neighborhood House. Other on-site employers include the Highline Community College and King County Sheriff's Office. The Boys and Girls Club and Food Bank provide several part-time and volunteer positions.

There are five resident-owned businesses in operation by existing community residents. All but one of the businesses is operated off-site and all are administered from the home. The following services are provided by the businesses: home daycare, landscaping, sewing, and interpretation.⁹

Approximately 300 businesses are located within the main area of White Center and provide employment opportunities to the residents of the existing community. The largest employers

⁸ Blackshear-Haley, HSD, personal communication, 2003.

⁹ Goldsmith, KCHA, personal communication, 2003.

include LaMexicana (wholesale Mexican food manufacturer), McClendon's Hardware, Napa Auto Parts, Walgreen's, Bartell Drugs, among others.¹⁰

The majority of households (65 percent) within the existing community receives annual incomes of \$12,000 or less, compared to the median King County per capita incomes of over \$53,000 (as noted earlier in this section under *Population Characteristics*). Slightly over 25 percent of the existing community households report income from employment. Typically, the reported income originates from service and retail jobs. Public assistance, Social Security, and SSI make up the majority of income for the existing community families.¹¹

KCHA is currently working with residents to improve earning potential and income levels. It operates the Park Lake Career Development Center within the housing development. The Center brings together on-site outreach workers, individual service plans, and support from other resources (i.e., Highline Community College, Seattle-King County Private Industry Council, King County Jobs Initiatives, Refugee Federation Service Center) to create and promote family stability, rewarding work, and self-sufficiency for Park Lake residents.¹²

Unemployment Rate: Data from Census Tract 265 indicates that 822 of the 1,751 persons (16 years and older) were employed in the year 2000. Of the persons over 16 years of age, males comprised 48.5 percent and females comprised 29.1 percent. The unemployment rate within this area is approximately 53.1 percent.¹³

The unemployment rate within Census Tract 265 starkly contrasts that of King County estimates. Labor force statistics for August 2002 estimate a county-wide unemployment rate of 6.2 percent.¹⁴ This figure was even lower at the time of the 2000 Census. County estimates have been consistent with the rest of the State of Washington and throughout the nation, rising as the national economy contracts and falling as it expands.¹⁵ In August 2002, the unemployment rates of Washington and the nation were 6.7 percent and 5.7 percent, respectively.¹⁶

Business Climate: The project site is located four blocks east of the White Center neighborhood business district. Located at 16th Avenue Southwest and Delridge Way, the district serves the Park Lake neighborhood and is characterized by a highly diverse commercial area. The area contains retail, service, professional, and financial establishments – approximately 30 percent of these businesses are minority-owned. Local restaurants offer diverse international cuisines, offering Thai, Cambodian, Vietnamese, and Mexican.¹⁷ The area also contains numerous dilapidated, abandoned and boarded-up businesses or vacant lots. The exterior conditions of some buildings create the appearance of a vacant space, when, in fact, the building is occupied.¹⁸

Historically, the large percentage of land devoted to public housing in the White Center area and the high poverty level have discouraged new commercial activity and revitalization efforts.

¹⁰ Liebel, S&L Realty, personal communication, 2003.

¹¹ KCHA, 2001.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ US Census Bureau, 2000.

¹⁴ Washington State Department of Information Services, 2003.

¹⁵ Washington State Employment Security Department, 2001.

¹⁶ Washington State Department of Information Services, 2003.

¹⁷ KCHA, 2001.

¹⁸ Liebel, S&L Realty, personal communication, 2003.

Property values have lagged behind other nearby areas, as well as the King County and greater Seattle area. Most of the houses are maintained, but several rundown properties exist in the neighborhood. A few of the more deteriorated homes are concentrated around the project site.¹⁹

Housing market research for the area around the project site indicates an extremely low single-family home vacancy rate (3.2 percent) and an active for-sale housing market. This data was reported in June 2001 by Dupre + Scott Apartment Advisors, and does not reflect more recent economic changes precipitated by the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, regional job layoffs, or current recession. However, the study noted that the considerable demand for both rental and for-sale housing is not an anomaly. The average vacancy rate from 1995 to 2000 remained consistently around 3.6 percent. The study also predicted that with little new construction expected for the project area through 2002, housing demand would continue and vacancies would tend to be lower.

Commercial lease vacancy rates, not including industrial space, are also low in the White Center area. Currently, vacancy rates are approximately 1 percent.²⁰ Typical commercial vacancy rates for the South Seattle area and south of the project site into Tacoma are closer to 15 percent.²¹ The reasons for such a low vacancy rate can be attributed to White Center's small commercial base and the low average price per square foot (\$.57 to \$1.50 per square foot)²². The industrial core in White Center has a current vacancy rate of 15 to 20 percent.

¹⁹ KCHA, 2001.

²⁰ Liebel, S&L Realty, personal communication, 2003.

²¹ Heeter, CB Richard Ellis, personal communication, 2003.

²² Liebel, S&L Realty, personal communication, 2003.